(a) whether Government propose to set up a maritime museum at Dwaraka to promote the submerged city as a tourist spot;

(b) if so, the details of the project; and

(c) by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) A project proposal "Preservation of Under Water Cultural Heritage of India, Dwaraka" has been received for consideration under National Cultural Fund.

The proposal envisages an underwater museum for conservation of the "Submerged city" of Dwaraka and also a maritime museum of antiquities found in excavations at Dwaraka, Somnath and Nageshwar.

(c) A committee with representatives from the ASI, National Institute of Oceanography and Gujarat Tourism has been set up to examine various aspects of the proposal including viability. Future actions would hinge on the recommendations of the committee.

Return of Nizam's jewels to Andhra Pradesh

2026. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has requested the Central Government to return Nizam's jewels presently kept in RBI valuts in New Delhi for display in Hyderabad Museum;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for not yet responding to the request?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has written to the Prime Minister suggesting that jewels be kept and displayed in a museum in Hyderabad as they are linked with the history of Nizam dynasty and their display in Hyderabad would boost tourist potential.

After protracted litigation, the Government of India acquired 173 items of jewellery from the Nizam Jewellery Trust and Nizam Supplemental Trust at a cost of Rs. 218 crores. Since these jewels are invaluable and need extraordinary security, they were kept in the Gold Valuts of Reserve Bank Of India, Mumbai. While allowing the Government to acquire the jewellery, the Supreme Court observed that after acquisition, the jewellery would become public property and therefore, the public should have a right of viewing the heritage.

At present, the National Museum, New Delhi is the only museum in the country equipped to display the jewels, and as such in order to comply with the Supreme Court's directives, the exhibition would be held first at National Museum, New Delhi.

Foreign exchange paid to import sugar from Pakistan

2027 SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the importers of sugar from Pakistan have furnished the information regarding the foreign exchange paid by them to Pakistan for the imports during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what action Government propose to take against such importers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Closing down of weak PSU banks

2028. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry have criticized the recommendations of CII of close down the weak public sector banks;

(b) whether Government have extended freedom to the banks to recover their dues from the defaulting corporates; and

(c) if so, what new initiatives Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The CII have withdrawn the recommendation, of a Task Force appointed by it, regarding the closure of the weak public sector banks. There had been varied reactions on the recommendation of C.II. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry has reported that they have not criticized any such recommendation.

(b) Banks are totally free to recover their dues from all defaulters.